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AUTHOR Finley, Cathaleen
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ABSTRACT

Nine out of 10 girls can expect to work for pay; six of them will be part of the labor force for 30 years. Today five out of ten women between the ages of 18 and 64 are working outside the home. A young woman must plan to be a worker as well as wife and mother. One fourth of all American Indian women who work for pay are clerical workers, one-fifth service workers, and another one-fifth do factory type work, all relatively low paying jobs. The world is changing; women expect to live longer and have fewer children; and there are more widowed, divorced, separated, and unmarried women. Greater attention must be given to career planning. This document is the introduction to the "Choices and Careers: Free to Choose" program for young tribal women, which endeavors to help girls think through the choices they have and to plan so that options are open for career choices. It discusses new career opportunities for women, including the non-traditional jobs becoming available, the value of higher education, and early conditioning that creates the passivity, dependence and non-competitive attitudes that hamper girls in realizing their fullest potential. (DS)

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Women Today and Tomorrow

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by Catheleen Finley

Illustrated by Vicki Wayman

Choices and Careers Free To Choose

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Cooperative Extension Programs
University of Wisconsin-Extension

Women Today and Tomorrow

by Cathaleen Finley

Illustrated by Vicki Wayman

About The Author

Cathaleen Finley is an associate professor in the Department of Family Development at University of Wisconsin—Extension. Vicki Wayman, a member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewas, did the illustrations for the unit.

About The Program

"Women Today and Tomorrow" has been developed as part of the project Choices & Careers, Free to Choose, a career development project for tribal girls. The project was developed with the assistance of tribal women in Wisconsin and was funded with special needs funds from Extension Service-USDA.

University of Wisconsin—Extension, Gale L. VandeBerg, director, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin counties, publishes this information to further the purpose of the May 8 and June 30, 1914 Acts of Congress; and provides equal opportunities in employment and programming.

Fact Sheet

Women Today and Tomorrow — Unit for Adults

Choices & Careers
Free To Choose

The unit "Women Today and Tomorrow" is designed as a means of introducing the program "Choices & Careers, Free to Choose" to the Community. It is written for parents and other individuals who work with girls.

The unit focuses upon the reasons for having such a program and the expectations of the program. It emphasizes that women are part of the labor force, although they are often employed in low-paying jobs. It discusses the changing world for women, and new opportunities for careers for women.

The unit includes a Leaders Guide, (W2IA3), "Women Today and Tomorrow" (W3IA3), and a set of slides, "Choices & Careers," (WISD1).

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W1IA3

CHOICES & CAREERS; FREE TO CHOOSE

Women Are Part of the Labor Force

Choices & Careers, Free to Choose. Why is there such a program for girls? One reason is that employment patterns of women are changing.

Did you know that nine out of 10 girls can expect to work for pay? Six out of 10 girls can expect to be part of the labor force for 30 or more years of their life.

Today five out of 10 women between the ages 18 and 64 are working outside the home. More and more women are combining marriage and employment. Four out of 10 married women are in the work force today. Mothers

are part of the work force. In fact, in Wisconsin 32 percent of Indian women who work for pay have children under the age of six.

Given these figures, it is reasonable to expect young women to take their part in the work force for long periods of time. So a young woman today must plan to be a worker as well as a wife and mother.

What Kind of Work?

What kinds of work do women do today? In 1973 more than 40 percent of all working women were concentrated in only 10 jobs, those being secretaries, retail clerks, household workers, elementary school teachers, bookkeepers, waitresses, nurses, typists, cashiers, and sewers and stitchers. But girls today have many more choices. Besides, some of those jobs require or will require more education, or already have an oversupply of workers.

One-fourth of all American Indian women who work for pay are clerical workers, such as secretaries, typists, or bookkeepers.

In the total female working population, about one-third do clerical-type work. In fact, 78 percent of all clerical workers are women. The median salary per year for a clerical worker is $6469.

One-fourth of all American Indian workers are service workers, such as waitresses, cooks, nurses' aides, and beauticians. For the total work population of women in this country, one out of five women is a service worker. Service workers have a median income of $4588 per year.

The third highest category of American Indian women workers is the operative class, with one out of five Indian women workers doing factory-type work. Of the total female population in this country, 13 percent work as operatives. Women in this group have a median income of $5358 per year.

In the category of professional and technical workers, there is a small number of Indian women. Eleven percent of American Indian women workers are professional and technical workers

compared to 15 percent of the total number of women workers in this country. Professional and technical workers have a median income of $9093 per year. But we must take a careful look at these figures. Of the 15 percent of women workers, 50 percent are elementary or high school teachers, and 25 percent are nurses. Fewer than 1 percent of all women who work fill those jobs which most Americans think of as professional, such as physicians, lawyers, judges, engineers, scientists, editors, or college professors. In fact, 85 percent of elementary school teachers are women.

The number of women in management and administrative types of work is very small. Two out of every 100 American Indian women workers are managers or administrators. And the percentage is not much better for the rest of the women in the country; it's four out of every 100. Women in management and administration have a median income of $7667 per year.

What About Earning Power?

What does all this mean? For one thing, there is the matter of money. Why do women work? Many women work out of economic necessity. For example, 68 percent of minority women workers in 1973 were single, widowed, divorced, separated, or had husbands who earned less than $5000 a year. One out of every five American Indian families is headed by a woman.

But where do women stand in terms of earning power? When you compare minority women, white women, minority men, and white men you find minority women at the bottom, with white women earning more than minority women and white men earning more than minority men.

Such data help explain why 55 percent of all Wisconsin Indian

women who head families live in poverty and why only 12 percent of the American Indian people who earn $15,000 or more a year are women. Furthermore, American Indian women have the highest unemployment rate of any group of people in the country: 10.2 percent in 1970.

Another factor which shows that women lack earning power is the wage gap. The average man working full-time in 1974 earned about $5000 more than the average woman. In 1955 men were earning 57 percent more than women. Today, the gap is still 57 percent. There are two main reasons for the gap. Many women are in low-paying, low-skilled jobs, and there is an increasing number of women entering the work force at beginners' level jobs.

True, money isn't everything. But few would argue that one doesn't need enough money for food, shelter, and clothing, especially if she is the head of a family. This program tries to help girls make choices which can enhance their earning power.

Using One's Talents

Another cause of concern is the use of one's talents. Don't you

suppose just as many women are suited to be professional people, or elementary school principals, or administrators as they are to be secretaries, typists, or bookkeepers? This program is designed to help the girls in making choices so they are prepared to do work appropriate to their abilities and talents. The program should help the girl who has an interest in science to select science courses in high school rather than to pursue only secretarial-type subjects. Why can't girls become physicians rather than nurses, pilots rather than stewardesses?

A Changing World For Women

The world is changing. Women can expect to live longer. At the turn of the century women in this country expected to live to be 48 years old. Today, they can expect to live to be 75 years old. In 1975 the median age at death for Wisconsin Indian people was 60. What do you think the life expectancy for your daughter will be?

Women are having fewer children. "The pill" and other birth control devices have given women greater control over their bodies and their lives. Most women have their last child before age 30, leaving about 35 years of active life ahead of them.

Women with children work for pay. In fact, 32 percent of Wiscon-

sin Indian women with children under the age of six are employed. More and more communities are developing day care centers. Such services give women greater freedom and provide greater educational opportunity for their children.

Another change is that there is an increasing number of single, divorced, widowed, and separated women. One out of five American Indian families is headed by a woman. Also, there is an increasing number of young women in their early twenties who are unmarried. Certainly, all these changes mean a woman has more choices, but also that a woman must have the means to be economically independent. This is the reason greater attention must be given to career plans.

There was a time when most of a woman's life was spent raising her children. That is no longer the case. How is a woman going to use that additional time? This program is an effort to help the girls think through the choices they have and to plan so that options will be open to them for the careers of their choice.

Technology has caused changes for women. Remember the work that washday used to be. Today, washers and dryers, or laundromats, mean far less work. Technology has created many changes for women.

Think of the convenience foods at the supermarket, modern plumbing,

and furnaces—the list could go on and on. All of this means that women have greater freedom and a greater number of choices.

Let's go back in history a bit. There was a time when tribal women tanned hides in order to have clothing. Later on, Indian women did a lot of hand sewing to make clothing, quilts, and other articles. Some of you may remember stories of your grandmother's getting her first sewing machine. That certainly saved a lot of labor. But today,

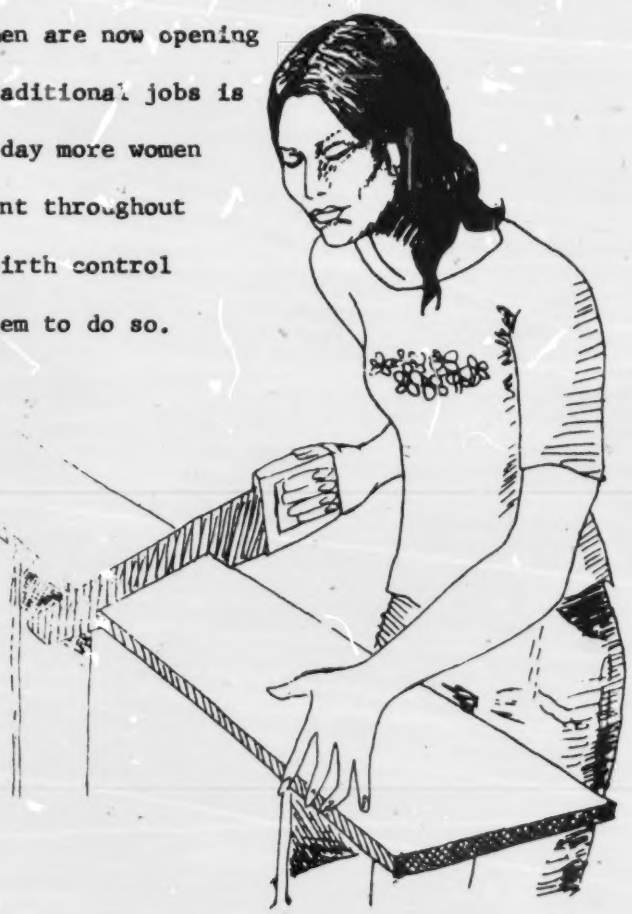
clothing is usually bought at the store. For some who sew at home, sewing may be more of a leisure-time or hobby type of activity than a matter of necessity. But buying clothing in a store takes money. Today, people tend to use money to buy goods and services rather than to produce them themselves. This means one must be able to earn an income. In the past, tribal women were medicine women and midwives. Today, their tasks are performed by doctors and other health workers. In the past, tribal women raised and gathered food and preserved it. Today, most food is purchased in a supermarket. In the past, tribal women helped to build homes. Today, money is needed to buy homes that architects design and builders build.

Most people agree that it would be difficult to get along without the medical professions, or the services of people in business, or modern-day homes. This is one of the reasons it is so important for young girls to plan for the career of their choice.

New Opportunities in Careers

How does a young woman go about choosing a career? There are literally thousands of careers from which to choose. Choosing is difficult. A girl might take a look at the kinds of things she likes and in which she is interested, and then try to match these things with jobs in which she can do the kinds of things she likes. But there are some other factors at which it may be helpful to look.

It's important to remember that some fields previously restricted to men or nontraditional jobs for women are now opening up for women. This increase in nontraditional jobs is due partly to affirmative action. Today more women are serious about continuing employment throughout their lifetime. Certainly improved birth control methods and day care centers allow them to do so. More and more women are entering nontraditional jobs. For example, from 1960 to 1970 the number of women carpenters more than doubled. And the number of women lawyers doubled.



Yet the numbers remain small. Less than 2 percent of electricians are women. One percent of plumbers are women. Women account for 9 percent of physicians and only 3 percent of dentists. They do a bit better as insurance agents: 12 percent of insurance agents are women. But it appears that nontraditional jobs

will continue to be open to women and deserve consideration by young women.

The concern that has been shown for the health of the American population, especially the older person, has really expanded health programs and created new jobs for therapists, dieticians, pharmacists, laboratory workers, and health workers in general.

The employment of women as bank officials and financial managers has expanded rapidly in recent years and is expected to continue. There is an expected need for more managers and administrators. As businesses tend to grow larger, there will be a need for more technically trained managers.

It is expected that the need for professional and technical workers in the areas of environmental protection, urban renewal, and mass transportation will increase. Demands for professional workers to develop and use computer resources also are expected to grow rapidly.

It is interesting to take a look at federal civil service. At the Government Service grades of 1 through 6, the lowest GS grades, 47 percent of the positions are filled by women, but at grades 13 and above, the highest grades, only 4.5 percent of the positions are filled by women. It's encouraging to note, though, that this situation is changing and should continue to improve with affirmative action. Affirmative action affects not only minorities but women as well, thus young Indian women have two pluses in choosing a career.

One area in which there has been a definite decrease in the number of women workers is that of private household workers. Fewer women are willing to accept the low pay of the private household worker. It is expected that there will be a slow growth in retail sales clerking because there will be many more self-serve stores.

Clerical workers may also expect changes. The use of computers to handle routine work is expected to reduce the need for clerks. On the other hand, the number of clerical workers needed to prepare materials for computers is expected to increase greatly. This means more training will be needed by a person preparing to be a clerical worker.

Employers will be seeking people who have higher levels of education because many jobs are becoming increasingly complex and require greater skill. Employment growth generally will be the fastest in those occupations requiring the most education and training. For

example, professional occupations requiring the most education will show the fastest growth through the mid-1980's.

You can expect many areas of work to require more than a high school diploma. As new automated equipment is introduced on a wider scale in offices, banks, insurance companies, and government operations, skill requirements will rise for clerical and other jobs. Employers are demanding better trained workers to operate complicated machinery. Because many occupations are becoming increasingly complex and technical, specific occupation training such as that obtained through colleges, apprenticeships, junior and community colleges, and post-high-school vocational educational training courses is becoming more and more important for young people preparing for successful careers. It looks as if young women are going to need ample education if they are to earn a decent livelihood on the job market in the years ahead.

What About Women Today?

Women with four or more years of college had an unemployment rate of 2 percent in 1974. Women with one to three years of high school had an unemployment rate of 10 percent at the same time. Six out of 10 women with four or more years of college were employed in 1974, as compared to four out of 10 women who had one to three years of high school.

Women with more education are likely to earn more money. In 1974 women with four or more years of college earned almost double what women with one to three years of high school earned.

The amount of education a woman has greatly affects the type of job she can obtain. For example, 70 percent of the women with four or more years of college were in professional or technical positions,

jobs that tend to pay more. Of the women who had completed high school but had no other training, 50 percent were in clerical occupations; and of those women who didn't complete high school, 50 percent were operatives or service workers.

What Makes Girls Girls?

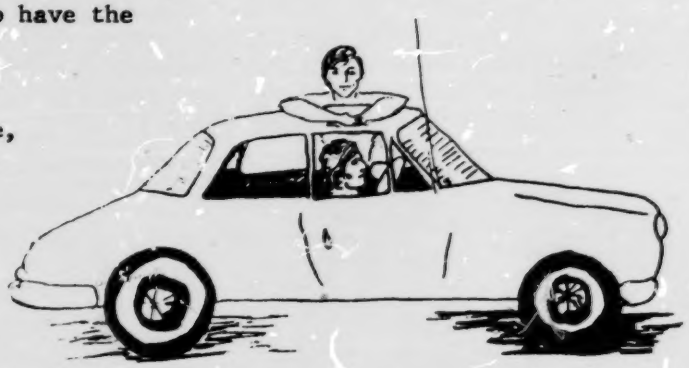
We have seen that women work, but they don't earn as much money as men. Why is this? One reason has been discrimination. However, a number of laws have been passed which provide equal opportunity for both women and minorities. Also, these rules and regulations are now being enforced. Therefore, there should be a greater number of choices for young Indian women.

But there appear to be some other problems that prevent girls from achieving their full potential. A close look at child-rearing practices shows that girls learn to be passive, sweet, and dependent. These are not exactly traits that will help them succeed in the world of work. Baby girls are given more attention than baby boys. They are touched and spoken to more often than baby boys. Frequently little girls are given more affection and protection than little boys. Such practices tend to encourage dependency in girls.

Somehow, many

girls learn to be submissive to males. How often have you seen little girls play as doctors, and boys play as nurses? Probably not very often.

Somehow, boys learn to excel in math and science and girls learn it's not important to do well in math. Do you suppose it's because mother is proud of being a moron about math and dad acts very ashamed if he doesn't know what it's all about? Somehow, women learn it's not smart to act too bright or too assertive, and men are discouraged from being too sensitive or too tender. Think of how TV ads show women. How bright does one have to be to have the shiniest floors in town?



About junior high school age, girls start placing a great deal of emphasis on boys. Somehow, a girl learns that it is important to have a boyfriend and eventually a husband. Have you ever heard someone say, "Girls don't need as much education as boys, but they should have something to fall back on in case her husband dies"? Girls learn that finding a man should receive top priority. They learn to evaluate themselves in terms of sexual and maternal success.

Also, starting at the junior high school level girls tend to fuss a great deal about how they look. And no wonder. Bodies have been

portrayed either as something shameful to be covered or something short of beauty that needs changing. Think of the amount of money spent on advertising cosmetics. Girls worry because they are too short or too tall. Even though dress today is casual and comfortable, girls worry if they are not dressed like everyone else. Not infrequently women are judged in terms of their appearance. Unfortunately all these forces tend to cause girls to worry about their outside appearance at a time when they should be concentrating on other aspects of themselves.

Many young women think that life ends at 25. We must help girls understand that life may go on for 50 years past that point and that there is <u>not</u> a Prince Charming who is going to take care of them forever. Girls must be aware of the many years in their life and the fact that they must do some planning early in life to be prepared.

Consistently studies have shown that girls do not plan, they do not seek occupational information, and they lack realistic occupational plans.

Girls must be made aware of the importance of decisions they make at an early age. For example, the young girl who

takes only typing, shorthand, and bookkeeping will find doors closed to many careers.

Women learn to fear success. One research study showed that even the most successful college women has a fear of success, believing that if they were successful in a career they could not be successful in love. Is it surprising that 28 percent of Wisconsin Indian babies are born to teenage mothers?

But no one should say that mothers should stay at home and do a better job of raising daughters. The fact that a mother is employed does not seem to have any effect on her children. Employment of mothers actually seems to benefit the children. Children of working mothers are no more likely to have problems than are children of mothers who are not employed. In fact, daughters of working mothers are more likely to work themselves, and when asked to name the one woman they most admire they are most likely to name their own mothers.

The early conditioning for marriage and motherhood as the only roles they will fill leads many girls to a negative self-concept which says not <u>I can</u>, but <u>I can't</u>.

What About the Program?

This program is an attempt to change this conditioning. It will attempt to help a girl realize that she has a uniqueness and an indi-

viduality of her own that makes her special, and to help her understand her right to freedom of choice in both her personal and work life. It is a hope that Indian girls will not grow up to be subordinate to men in their roles but that they will be doctors as well as nurses, principals as well as teachers, supervisors as well as secretaries, lending officers as well as tellers, deans as well as administrative assistants.

Hopefully, this program will help overcome the passivity and dependency that keep girls from finding room at the top of the competition. The program will try to deal with the fear of success and competency that keeps women from maximizing their potential and will help girls make what may be called a first-class rather than a second-class contribution to society.

Hopefully, the program will help girls utilize their potential, potential which is sorely needed by society. What we hope will happen, is that more girls will say not, "What can I do?" but, "What I can do."